

Agenda Item: 13-5

Meeting Dates: October 13 and 14, 2004

LEAD SCIENTIST'S REPORT

Report on Developing a Research Agenda for Determining How Much Water is Necessary for Full Recovery of Threatened or Endangered Fish Species Dependent on the Delta

I have been working with scientists from the Independent Science Board, CBDA, and other CALFED agencies on a report to be submitted by the CBDA Science Program to the Legislature by the January 10, 2005 deadline. This report will describe our approach to developing a research agenda, and our approach will likely include a series of public workshops to review draft material and solicit feedback. A strategic research agenda will be prepared and finalized by the Science Program based on this feedback. The Independent Science Board may be asked to review this research agenda at different stages of its development.

Science Conference

The third biennial CALFED Bay-Delta Program Science Conference is set for October 4-6 at the Sacramento Convention Center. The event is expected to draw more than 1,000 researchers and scientists and provides a forum to discuss the latest developments on important scientific issues facing California's water supply system such as water operation and biology, fish protection, levee integrity, water quality and ecosystem restoration. Researchers working with CALFED programs will share their findings at the conference with the broad community of scientists, engineers, managers and stakeholders working on Bay-Delta-related issues. This year, more than 300 individual presentations and posters on topics such as fish screens, water quality, sediment, invasive species and climate change are planned. I will give a brief summary of some of the conference highlights at the October 13-14 meeting.

Annual Review of the Environmental Water Account Program

Preparations are proceeding well for the fourth annual review of the Environmental Water Account (EWA) in November 2004. Working with EWA implementing agency representatives, the Science Program recently convened a two-day workshop (September 8th and 9th) focusing on technical aspects of EWA implementation and results over the last four years. A written summary of the workshop is now in preparation and should be available by mid October. Staff also recently completed a comprehensive update of the Science Program's EWA web page. This web page focuses on information and documents related to past technical workshops and annual reviews. All past review documents and technical reports are now available from the Science Program EWA web page.

The 2004 EWA Technical Review Panel meeting is scheduled for November 8-9, 2004. EWA Technical Panel reviews in each of the first three years focused on: 1) the scientific information underlying actions taken; 2) the incremental changes in the way decisions were made, and; 3) the technical basis for those decisions. In contrast, the 2004 review will focus on two topics: the first four years as a whole, and continuation of the EWA over the next three years. As in previous reviews, the 2004 review will focus on technical aspects of EWA planning and implementation. The Panel's charge and a draft meeting agenda will be made available to the public in October.

Independent Science Board Activities

The ISB met on September 21 and 22, 2004. Substantive items discussed, and associated actions taken are briefly listed below. The ISB will convene a follow-up meeting on November 10, 11, and 12, 2004:

- a. Delta Water Quality Standards and the Delta Improvements Package - Several ISB members agreed to examine modeling and monitoring approaches for the Delta and develop specific next steps for enhancing the processing and use of this information. The ISB also intends to invite an expert in data assimilation to its next meeting. The long-term goal is to explore and discuss the role of merging monitoring and modeling (data assimilation) both within the Delta and throughout the Sacramento-San Joaquin watersheds. This is the initiation of this effort by the ISB.
- b. Integration of the EWA and ERP - An ISB subcommittee will review a report on coordination between these two programs (to be developed by agency staff) at their November meeting, and will then determine their potential role in improving integration between the programs and plan future efforts.
- c. Levee integrity - ISB members presented results of an initial investigation regarding levee integrity issues in the face of tendencies and trajectories associated with sea-level rise, subsidence, earthquakes, and flooding. The subcommittee is continuing to work on the preliminary report to the ISB which will be reviewed and discussed before completion of a final report. The final report is expected sometime near the end of the year.
- d. Performance Measures - An ISB subcommittee was formed to examine the program's existing strategy and method for developing performance measures in relation to other similar efforts across the country. They have received basic information developed by the CBDA staff and will start preliminary discussions of performance measures at the November meeting.

San Francisco Estuary and Watershed Science (Online Journal)

The *San Francisco Estuary and Watershed Science* (the online peer-reviewed journal sponsored by the Science Program) has now published two volumes. There have been over 3200 downloads of papers from the journal to date. The next issue will be published in November (Vol. 2, Issue 3). This is an excellent (and free) resource of the latest science relating to California water issues. It is

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available to anyone with a web connection. You can find it at:
<http://repositories.cdlib.org/jmie/sfews/>

Interagency Ecological Program Review

The Science Program is collaborating with IEP agencies to conduct a full programmatic review in the coming year of the existing IEP. The review will be organized in two parts; the first part will focus on the success IEP as a program has had in producing needed information and fulfilling its basic mission and goals. The second part will focus on the overall scientific approach of IEP in the context of current knowledge about fish, flows, and environmental processes in the Delta. The review will be conducted by an independent panel in a public workshop format, using materials and presentations compiled by IEP agency staff. The first workshop is being planned for Spring 2005.